

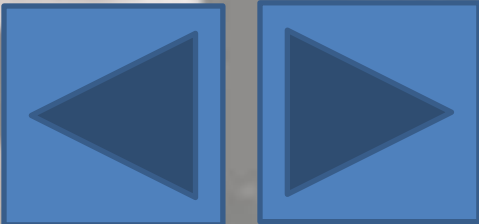
# Basics Of Customer Service

**How to treat in house customers  
and guests with Respect!**



# Introduction

- If you provide service to customers, either to co-workers or guests, your words and behaviors are the tools you use to create a positive customer perception of you and our Agency.
- Whether you are a novice working with customers or a seasoned pro, what you do and say will affect how people see you and our agency. You can't help it.
- Customers will form opinions, so you might as well learn how to create positive opinions. But you need to know how to do that.



# What to anticipate?

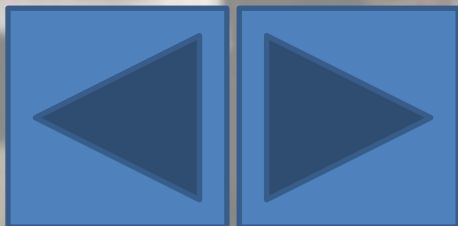


- That's what this presentation will teach you. Techniques you can use when interacting with customers so they will walk away with positive feelings about the experience.
- You'll learn about very specific things you can do or say in all kinds of customer interactions. You'll learn how to deal with difficult customers.
- You'll learn how to approach customers and how to get information from them so you can do your job.



# What to anticipate?

- You'll learn to deal with customer service problems quickly, efficiently, and professionally.
- Best of all, the techniques here will fit your needs, whether you are an executive, office worker, or even work in government.



# Who are your customers?



- Who are your customers, really? Too often, the definition of customer is limited to someone who is outside of our agency.
- Look up customer in your dictionary. The definition is a person with whom one has dealings.
- In fact, everyone who works has customers regardless of whether they work with external, paying customers or internal co-workers.
- Customers fall into external and internal categories.



# Who are your customers?

- **The external customer:** These are the people you deal with, either face-to-face or over the phone, who request information or assistance from you. They are customers in the traditional sense of the word. Without them there would be no paycheck. If your definition of a customer stops here, you are only seeing half the picture.
- **The internal customer:** The other half of the picture is the people who work inside our agency and rely on you for the services, products, and information that they need to get their jobs done. They are not traditional customers, yet they need the same tender, loving care you give to your external customers.

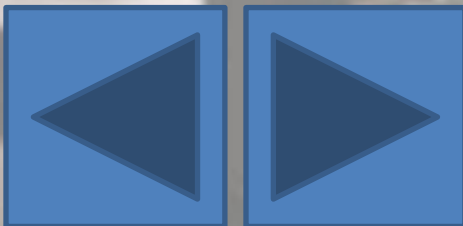
By expanding your definition of a customer to include your co-workers, you are taking a vital step toward excellent service.



# Let's start with a few things to do and a few NOT to do:



- First and foremost to providing excellent customer service is to **LISTEN** – whether it takes 10 seconds or 10 minutes. Let the customer talk so you can adequately take in and understand what they are saying. There is nothing more frustrating to a customer than explaining why they are calling only to have the customer service representative give a response that has nothing to do with what they are calling about.
- L – Let
- I – Information
- S – Seep
- T – Through
- E – Every
- N - Nerve



# Let's start with a few things to do and a few NOT to do:

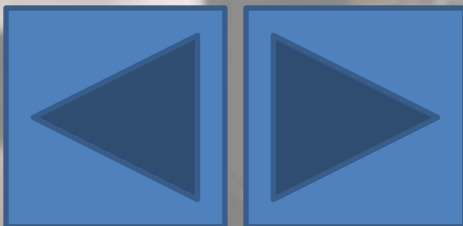
## Ask only relevant questions

- get to the underlying issue so you can quickly get to a resolution or at a minimum a plan of action to get to a resolution. If that means you need to take the customers request to your manager or speak with another group, let the customer know your plan.



**Let's start with a few things to do and a few NOT to do:**

- **Don't let your bad day reflect on your customers – and vice versa. Don't let a difficult customer make a bad day for you and affect other customers.**



# Let's start with a few things to do and a few NOT to do:

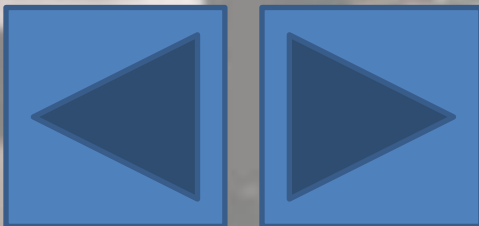
**Knowledge is power** – however, if you don't know the answer to a customer's question, don't make one up. Advise the customer that you will get the answer and set a follow-up to call or e-mail them as soon as you have the answer. If at all possible, provide the customer a timeframe of when to expect a response from you. This will alleviate any false expectations by the customer and prevent unnecessary repeat calls from the customer, which ultimately lead to customer frustration.



# Let's start with a few things to do and a few NOT to do:

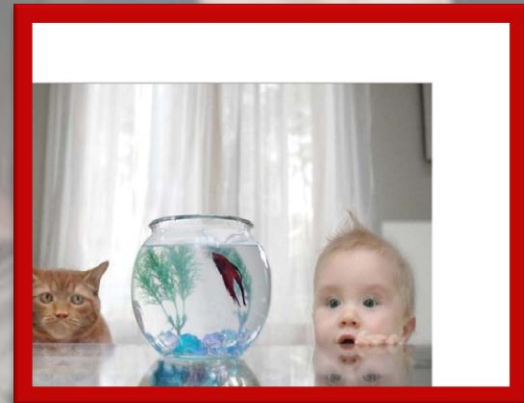


- **Know your voice tone** - The words you say are important, but just as important is the tone of your voice while you are saying them. Is your voice tone sincere and polite or rude and angry? Voice tone and inflection sends a message to the listener, or in our case, the customer. Although you may genuinely be sincere, your tone could reflect anger, rudeness or even disrespect. This is a quick turn-off to a customer.
- To test your voice tone, enlist the assistance of friends or family members. Set up a mock situation and record yourself, or if you don't have a way to record it, ask someone to listen while you play out a customer service call with another person. Also, do not hesitate to ask friends and family how you come across to them in various conversations (calm, controversial, etc.) Most often they will be (brutally) honest with you.



# Let's start with a few things to do and a few NOT to do:

**Be polite** – kindness and politeness is like sugar, sweetening even the worst of situations. When a customer is frustrated, angry or concerned they are looking to you to help them. Responding negatively, harshly or without concern will only worsen the situation and very likely cost the company a customer.



Let's start with a few things to do and a few NOT to do:



- **Know your customer** – If you keep referring to Mrs. Johnson of Jackson Avenue as Mrs. Jackson of Johnson Avenue, you can be sure she will not continue doing business with your company. While any business can make a mistake, constant misspelled names and similar foul-ups do not encourage regular customers to return.



# Our Commitment to Customer Service



- Great customer service is not an accident. It takes effort, dedication and commitment.
- This commitment and support is required from everyone in the agency.
- Whether customer service is provided by a live person, by phone, or by e-mail, providing excellent customer service requires all agency personnel to commit to and practice the following:



# The List

- **Commit to quality.** Everyone in the agency needs to be devoted to creating a positive experience for the customer. Always try to go above and beyond customer expectations.
- **Treat people with courtesy and respect.** Remember that every contact with a customer — whether it's by email, phone, written correspondence, or face-to-face meeting — leaves an impression of our agency. Always acknowledge your customer by using phrases like "sorry to keep you waiting," "thank you," "you're welcome," "if you need any further assistance please be sure to contact," and "it's been a pleasure" Always thank the customer for contacting your agency.



# The List

- **Never argue with a customer.** As you know, the customer is not always right. But your focus needs to remain on how to correct or alleviate the situation
- **Don't leave customers hanging.** callbacks and emails need to be handled with a sense of urgency. Customers want immediate resolution, and if you can give it to them, you'll probably win their respect.

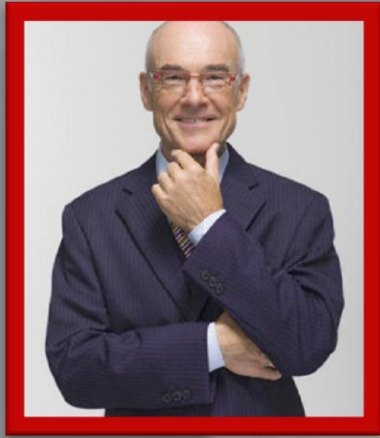


# The List

- **Always provide what you promise.** Don't promise what you can't deliver. Fail to deliver and you'll lose credibility. If you guarantee an answer within 24 hours, get the answer out within 24 hours or less. If you can't make good on your promise, apologize.



# Communications



- Communication is the crux of providing excellent customer service. Below are a few tips in communication:
- **Written Communications:**
  - Watch your abbreviations –
  - Check spelling and grammar –



# Communications



- **Verbal Communications:**
- **Be Professional** at all times. Refrain from using slang, childish or derogatory speech. Speak to your customer with respect.
- **Be clear** and concise when speaking. Speak at a pace that your customer will be able to understand and comprehend your statement or question, and avoid using jargon.



# Six Basic Needs

Every time customers do business with you, they are, without fully realizing it, scoring you on how well you are doing, not only at giving them what they want, but at fulfilling six basic customer needs. Following is a list of these needs:

- **Friendliness:** The most basic of all customer needs, friendliness is usually associated with being greeted politely and courteously.
- **Understanding and empathy:** The second most basic of all customer needs.
- **Fairness:** The need to be treated fairly is high up on most customers' list of needs.
- **Control:** Control represents the customers' need to feel as if they have an impact on the way things turn out.
- **Options and alternatives:** Customers need to feel that other avenues are available to getting what they want accomplished.
- **Information:** Customers need to be educated and informed about the policies, and procedures they encounter when dealing with our Agency.



# In Conclusion

Important to Remember –  
Providing excellent  
customer service can be  
job security.



To become a “Customer  
Service Superstar” take  
the [Customer Service skills  
assessment quiz](#).

Your completion  
certificate and score will  
be forwarded to you by  
HR.

